

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 5, 1997
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY FEBRUARY 7, 1997

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—1997–98 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 10

Introduced by Assembly Member Floyd

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Ackerman, Aguiar, Alby, Alquist, Baca, Battin, Baugh, Bordonaro, Bowen, Bustamante, Cardoza, Ducheny, Escutia, Figueroa, Firestone, Frusetta, Gallegos, Goldsmith, Granlund, Havice, Hertzberg, House, Keeley, Knox, Kuehl, Kuykendall, Leach, Leonard, Machado, Margett, Martinez, Mazzoni, McClintock, Morrissey, Morrow, Murray, Napolitano, Olberg, Oller, Pacheco, Papan, Perata, Pringle, Runner, Scott, Takasugi, Thompson, Thomson, Torlakson, Villaraigosa, Vincent, Washington, Wayne, Wildman, Woods, and Wright)

February 4, 1997

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 10—Relative to the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Capitol Park.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 10, as amended, Floyd. Veterans Memorials: The Wall That Heals.

This measure would encourage all Californians to take part in ceremonies concerning The Wall That Heals, and that all measures be taken to inform Californians of related ceremonies so that they are given an opportunity to

remember and honor the service, efforts, and sacrifices of veterans.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The State of California has the largest
2 United States veterans population in the nation,
3 comprising some 3.3 million armed services veterans
4 (12.3 percent of the nationwide veteran population of
5 nearly 27 million) who represent an impressive one-fifth
6 of the state's total population; and

7 WHEREAS, It is estimated that 20.6 million (77
8 percent) of the total veteran population alive today are
9 wartime veterans, and, within California alone, nearly
10 300,000 of those veterans are disabled, and approximately
11 one-eighth of these veterans have experienced substance
12 abuse or post-traumatic stress disorders; and

13 WHEREAS, It is estimated that there are more than
14 3,000 American servicemen still prisoners of war (POW),
15 missing in action (MIA), and unaccounted for in Vietnam
16 and Korea; and

17 WHEREAS, According to figures from the 1996
18 California Department of Veterans Affairs, American
19 participation and casualties from the following wars were
20 estimated as: Mexican War (1846–48) 79,000 participants,
21 13,000 deaths in service; Indian Wars (1861–98) 106,000
22 participants, 1,000 deaths in service; United States Civil
23 War (1861–65) 2,213,000 Union participants, 364,000
24 Union deaths in service, 1,000,000 Confederate
25 participants, 134,000 Confederate deaths in service;
26 Spanish-American War (1898–1902) 392,000 participants,
27 11,000 deaths in service; World War I (1917–18) 392,000
28 participants, 116,000 deaths in service; World War II
29 (1940–45) 16,535,000 participants, 406,000 deaths in
30 service; Korean War (1950–53) 5,764,143 participants,
31 33,651 deaths in service; Vietnam War (1964–73) 8,744,000
32 participants, ~~58,168~~ 58,202 deaths in service; and the
33 Persian Gulf War (1991) 467,539 participants, 148 deaths;
34 and

35 WHEREAS, In times of peace, when the veteran's
36 service is not needed, it is an unfortunate but irrevocable



1 fact that Californians, like all other Americans, all too
2 quickly forget that it is the courage and sacrifice of those
3 veterans that preserve and maintain the freedom that we
4 enjoy; and

5 WHEREAS, The practice of forgetting about our debt
6 to our veterans took on an entirely different meaning
7 when our Vietnam veterans returned home to discover,
8 tragically, that not only did many Americans not want to
9 honor and pay homage to them, indeed, many Americans
10 wanted to forget them; and

11 WHEREAS, More than 350,000 California veterans
12 served in Vietnam, which resulted in 40,000 of them being
13 wounded and 5,822 being killed or missing in action, or
14 more than 10 percent of the nation's total; and

15 WHEREAS, More California residents died in Vietnam
16 than residents of any other state, and more Californians
17 received the Medal of Honor, the Bronze Star, and the
18 Purple Heart than veterans of any other state; and

19 WHEREAS, The Vietnam War divided Americans like
20 no other event since the United States Civil War, and
21 after nearly a decade of dissent and protest and of many
22 Americans trying to forget the Vietnam War, many
23 Americans ended up forgetting the Vietnam veterans
24 who came home to no marching bands and no welcome
25 home parades, and who went for years and years without
26 any sort of positive recognition; and

27 WHEREAS, For many, many thousands of those
28 veterans, the Vietnam War did not end, and has not
29 ended, as they continue to fight their own personal war
30 within themselves; and

31 WHEREAS, With the construction of the National
32 Vietnam War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.,
33 many Americans finally found the will to remember, and
34 all the homage due the Vietnam veterans could finally be
35 expressed; and

36 WHEREAS, In many ways, the national memorial has
37 done more to heal the wounds of the Vietnam War than
38 any proclamation, or any parade, could do, since the
39 memorial serves as a tribute to the sacrifice, a recognition
40 of the loss, and a symbol of the wound that we began to

1 heal, and in simple terms, the memorial serves as a
2 mourning place where Americans can come to physically
3 touch the memory of loved ones they lost or strangers
4 they honor for their sacrifices; and

5 WHEREAS, The history of the California Vietnam
6 Veterans Memorial began when Herman Woods, a
7 double amputee who served in the 1st Air Cavalry
8 Division, United States Army (1970), returned to
9 California from the dedication of the National Vietnam
10 Veterans Memorial in our nation's capitol in Washington,
11 D.C.; and

12 WHEREAS, Herman Woods began a grassroots effort
13 to assist then Assembly Member Richard E. Floyd, a
14 Korean War combat veteran, in passing Floyd's measure,
15 Assembly Bill No. 650, which proposed that a California
16 Vietnam Veterans Memorial be built entirely from
17 private funds, and it was then that former Captain ~~Brian~~
18 *Brien* Thomas "B.T." Collins, a United States Army
19 veteran who was a member of the Green Berets, who
20 served two tours of duty in Vietnam, who was wounded,
21 and who also later served in the California State
22 Assembly, became involved with the memorial and his
23 tireless efforts were a driving force in the establishment
24 and completion of the memorial prior to his early death;
25 and

26 WHEREAS, The newly formed Vietnam Veterans
27 Memorial Commission was comprised of nine veterans,
28 eight of whom served in Vietnam and who included the
29 following persons: Linda J. ~~McKlenahan, President; Leo~~
30 ~~K. Thorsness~~ *McClenahan, Chairperson; Leo K.*
31 *Thorsness*, Congressional Medal of Honor winner and
32 Vice ~~President; Chairperson;~~ Gregory C. Green,
33 Treasurer; Abel A. Cota, Secretary; B.T. Collins, member;
34 Don A. Drumheller, member; Jesse G. Ugalde, member;
35 Senator Jim Ellis, member; Assembly Member Richard E.
36 Floyd, member and author of Assembly Bill No. 650; and
37 Jerri L. ~~Ewen Dale~~, Executive Officer; led to the creation
38 of the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the theme
39 of which reflects "the overwhelming majority of those
40 who were killed in Vietnam: 19-year old infantry soldiers,

1 their youth, comradery, and fatigue of the war and
2 [reflects] the American women who served,” with the
3 winning entry in the opening design competition being
4 awarded to Michael Larson, a Marine Corps Vietnam
5 veteran, and Thomas Chytrowski; and

6 WHEREAS, President Bill Clinton, in recently
7 awarding the Presidential Medal of Freedom to former
8 United States Senator Robert Dole, unveiled the winning
9 design for still another memorial, this one a National
10 World War II Memorial to pay homage to the 16 million
11 men and women who served in that war; and

12 WHEREAS, For years and years, California has had
13 plans for a memorial that will be privately financed, one
14 that will honor all California veterans who have served in
15 the armed services since statehood in 1850, a memorial
16 that, hopefully, will be a reality by the close of 1997; and

17 WHEREAS, These monuments have revived
18 California’s interest in the sacrifice of all our veterans and
19 have focused a renewed attention on our Vietnam
20 veterans, many of whom, especially the homeless, simply
21 have never had the resources to travel back to
22 Washington, D.C. to visit the National Vietnam Veterans
23 Memorial; and

24 WHEREAS, The Wall That Heals is a 250-foot wide
25 replica of the National Memorial that travels all across
26 America, giving veterans and nonveterans a chance to
27 share a common bond of sacrifice with the 58,202 men and
28 women who gave their lives in Vietnam; and

29 WHEREAS, The Wall That Heals brings the souls of
30 those 58,202 back home to their buddies, their wives and
31 husbands, parents, children, neighbors, and coworkers,
32 and allows them to exist once more in the comfort and
33 peace of familiar surroundings; and

34 WHEREAS, Assembly Member Richard E. Floyd has
35 made arrangements for The Wall That Heals to be in
36 Sacramento and in four additional sites in California from
37 early February to March, 1997; and

38 WHEREAS, The Wall That Heals, like the memorial in
39 Washington, D.C., transcends Vietnam by helping our
40 nation renew its relationship with veterans of all wars,

1 because viewers of the wall, from veterans to school
2 children, will realize a deeper appreciation of the role
3 that veterans have played throughout the history of our
4 country; now, therefore, be it

5 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the*
6 *Senate thereof concurring,* That all Californians be
7 encouraged to take part in ceremonies concerning The
8 Wall That Heals, including opening ceremonies, when it
9 is in an area near them, and that all steps and measures
10 necessary to inform all Californians as to the date of those
11 ceremonies and locating where The Wall That Heals will
12 be sited, be taken so that all Californians will be given an
13 opportunity to remember and honor the service, the
14 efforts, and the sacrifices of those veterans, and to pay
15 homage to those veterans who are still alive; and be it
16 further

17 *Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly
18 transmit a suitably prepared copy of this resolution to the
19 author for appropriate distribution.

